

State of Indiana
Governor's Workforce Cabinet

Tuesday, October 25, 2022

Meeting Minutes (Jasper/Region 11)

I. Call to Order

The Governor's Workforce Cabinet met in regular session starting at 10:00 a.m. ET at the Vincennes University Jasper campus, Center for Technology, Innovation, and Manufacturing, 850 College Avenue, Jasper, IN 47546, with Chairman Ryan Kitchell presiding.

Members Present: Rep. Bob Behning (virtual), Maurice Coates, Jr. (virtual), Robert Coons (virtual), Tony Denhart, Dr. Sue Ellspermann, Joyce Irwin (virtual), Megan Glover (virtual), Dr. Katie Jenner, Dr. Chuck Johnson, Mark Kara (virtual), Loren King, Ryan Kitchell, Theresa Koleszar, Chris LaMothe (virtual), Chris Lowery (virtual), Becca McCuaig (virtual), Kim Opsahl (virtual), Fred Payne (virtual), Paul Perkins, Dan Peterson, Marilyn Pitzulo, Todd Richardson (virtual), Dr. Steve Rogers, Steve Schreckengast, Rebecca Schroeder (virtual), David Shane (virtual), Senator Jeff Raatz (virtual), Steve Thalheimer (virtual), Tony Vespa (virtual).

Member Regrets: David Adams, Jody French

Welcome

Dr. Chuck Johnson, President of Vincennes University and GWC member, provided welcoming remarks.

Member Introductions

Chair Kitchell introduced the newest Cabinet members:

- David Adams, IN Department of Workforce Development, Commissioner
- Robert Coons, Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology, President
- Fred Payne, United Way of Central Indiana, President and CEO
- Christina Reagle, IN Department of Corrections, Commissioner
- Todd Richardson, Indiana University, Chief HR Officer and VP Human Resources

II. Consideration of the Minutes

Chair Kitchell entertained a motion to approve the meeting minutes from August 23, 2022. Motion – Dr. Katie Jenner; second – Paul Perkins; unanimously approved by the Cabinet

III. Chair Report

N/A

IV. State Data Overview

Fran Valentine, Chief Business Intelligence Officer for the Governor's Workforce Cabinet, presented the Regional Workforce Data Profile for Economic Development Region 11, identifying key points for the area. The current workforce population in region 11 is approximately 433,304, with 46% working age population (25-54). Warrick County has the highest median household income in the region at \$79,079 compared to the State's median household income of \$58,235. Barriers to employment in Region 11 include transportation and health issues, children under age six, working in poverty and lack of access to reliable internet.

There are seven major educational institutions located in four separate cities in the region including Vincennes, Evansville, Oakland City and St. Meinrad. 23,349 people (ages 25-64) do not have a high school degree.

V. Region 11 Overview

Sara Worstell, Executive Director, Southwest Indiana Workforce Board, shared recent initiatives, challenges and observations related to Region 11. Currently there are an abundance of job openings in the region, but job seekers are looking more and more for “gig” work – flexible hours and diverse types of work are important factors – childcare has been a barrier as well.

Region 11 held a “Jobapalooza” on Oct. 19th in Evansville – 115 job seekers attended the event with eight known job offers on site. Five more of these events are scheduled in Vanderburgh, Knox, Dubois, Perry and tentatively Posey counties. Another event was Neighborhood Navigators – this event was funded by the United Way to serve non-WIOA eligible individuals with mobile services. Teacher’s Manufacturing Bootcamps have had 207 educators participate from Gibson, Posey, Vanderburgh, Warrick & Dubois counties.

VI. Employer Spotlight – Farbest Foods

Elizabeth Schwartz, Human Resources Manager at Farbest Foods, presented an overview of the company whose headquarters are located in Jasper. The Huntingburg workforce consists of 716 employees. Farbest has a heavy focus on developing and recruiting, including hosting job fairs, classroom opportunities, employee scholarship opportunities and participating in events like the Dubois County Career Cruise and Junior Achievement Job Spark. 70% of the Farbest Huntingburg employees identify Spanish as their primary language, and all programs are targeted to support this population.

VII. Local Highlight – Hub 19

Dr. Tara Rasche, Superintendent, Northeast Dubois County School Corporation, Hub19 Chair, Jarred Howard, Director, Patoka Valley Career and Technical Cooperative, Matt Weinzapfel, COO/Executive Vice President of Manufacturing, Jasper Engines and Transmissions, and Christian Blome, Assistant Vice President and Dean, Vincennes University Jasper presented information on the Hub 19 initiative. It began as a Dubois County workforce development case study and included four county school corporations and a focus on preparing students for success, providing our teachers with innovation support, and partnering with local industries and businesses. Hub19 provides a vision and direction for educators throughout Dubois County and has become a liaison between education and local industry. The program requires robust collaboration and innovation in our education systems and employers.

VIII. Group Discussion

Whitney Ertel, Executive Director of the Governor’s Workforce Cabinet, reminded Cabinet members of the next meeting date: Thursday, December 15 in Richmond and also requested that Cabinet members submit any outstanding pieces of working group projects as the Cabinet prepares for a public release of legislative recommendations in November, after the election but prior to Thanksgiving.

IX. Adjournment

Chair Kitchell adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m. ET